The main issues likely to be discussed in the Power Ministers' Conference are:—

1. Review of the Performance of the Power Sector;

2. Financial Performance of State Electricity Boards;

3. Need for accelerated development of Hydro Resources;

4. Private Sector Participation;

5. Utilisation of External Assistance; and

6. Grid Discipline and Tariff for Inter-regional Exchange of Power.

Pending Power Projects of West Bengal

3009. SHRI PROF SAURIN BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of POWER AND NONCONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) What are the details of power projects from the State of West Bengal awaiting clearance of the Central Government and other connected authorities till date:

(b) what steps have been taken or are being taken to increase power generation capacity by the State;

(c) whether Government have earmarked the generation target for the State during the Eighth Five Year Plan period; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of House.

Exploitation of Biomass Power Technology

3010. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any long term plan has been formulated for the exploitation of the biomass power technology in the rural areas which have been bypassed by the urban-based centralised power grid on account of the prohibitive cost of power transmission to areas of low-load demand;

(b) if so, what are the broad features and financial implications thereof;

(c) whether this plan will also include the generation of energy from waste biomass; and

(d) what is the estimated quantity of power that can be generated from rice straw and rice husk which are available in the country in millions of tonnes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI):

(a) to (c) Although no long term plan for use of biomass for power generation has been formulated, the existence of this potential is well recognised. Research and Development and Demonstration Projects have been taken up like 10 MW Fluidised Bed Rice Straw Power at Jalkheri, Punjab; Tow bagasse based congeneration projects of 7.5 MW each in Tamil Nadu; several biomass gasification linked power projects ranging from 3 KW to 100 KW based on a wide variety of biomass wastes aggregating about 6.5 MW etc. Capacity addition of 300 MW through thermal/thermochemical conversion of wastes has been proposed during the VIII Plan depending avilability of funds. (d) About 1000 MW of power could be generated from presently